

RI Council on Assistive Technology
April 28, 2016 ~ 2:00 – 3:30 pm
Tech ACCESS of RI
110 Jefferson Blvd, Suite I, Warwick, RI

MINUTES

Attendees: Chair Michael Matraccia, Kathleen Grygiel, Acting ATAP Program Director; Justin Pasquazzi; Courtenay Petracca; Rob Pires; Colleen Poliselli; Melanie Sbardella; Tara Townsend; Kim Wennermark; Elisabeth Hubbard; Laurie DiOrio

Guest: Tammy Russo, RIPIN; Jim Petrone, West Bay; Leora Simone, CCRI; Lisa Macaruso, CCRI.

Partners: Kelly Charlebois, TechACCESS; Denise Corson, ATEL; Lisa Labitt, EBEC; Lorna Ricci, OSCIL

Excused: Flo Adeni-Awosika; Teresa O'Brien; Monica Dzialo; Cathy Stern; Ying Sun

Welcome: Kathleen Grygiel called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm until the Chair, Michael Matraccia arrived. Introductions were done by all attendees.

Approval of Minutes for January 28, 2016: Justin Pasquazzi made motion to accept the minutes as written. Robert Pires seconded. Motion was passed unanimously.

New Business: The MS Dream Center and Accessible RI teamed up with the RI Health Department and created booklets, "Accessible RI – The Resource for Navigating the Ocean State", to go along with the on-line accessibility app so that people in wheelchairs that need to visit different establishments or use the bathroom facilities know which establishments are accessible. Booklets were available for review. They are free of charge even though there is a price listed on them. The Health Department provided a grant to create these booklets, however, donations are being accepted. This booklet can be accessed electronically. There are several press conferences planned with the City of Warwick, Providence, Cranston as well as the state. For more brochures contact 401-338-8878. There is an interest for ad space should a second printing be made available by several of the partners.

New Members Needed: RICAT is always looking for new members to join. Those individuals in attendance can complete an application and submit it for approval at the next meeting.

Program Director Report: At the last meeting, Kathleen Grygiel noted that the Director for the ATAP program would be assigned to the new Assistant Administrator for VR. However, her primary responsibilities left her with limited time to focus her attention on the ATAP program. It was decided Kathleen Grygiel would continue as Acting Program Director of ATAP.

A decision was made to have the ATAP Program Director report to the Assistant Administrator for Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired once hired. That position was approved and should be posted. The reason the program has functioned so well is due to the partners, RICAT as an advisory group, and the continuing efforts from Sharon DiPinto who has been an invaluable asset with keeping the program moving along. RICAT will be advised once a decision is made. It will take approximately two months before having someone identified and making plans to start the position.

The State Plan is due for an annual update and is in the process of being completed in order to get final approval. There has not been a full re-write for the State Plan for approximately two years. Each year there is a general expectation along with an update on services, program, personnel, etc.

Kat explained that WIOA is a law that was passed in July 2014. It stands for Work Innovation Opportunity Act and replaces WIA which was the law that supported and guided how Title I dollars were spent in the VR Program, Department of Labor & Training and Department of Education. The difference with WIOA is when the law was written there was an expectation that state agencies, specifically the Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Department of Education and the Department of Labor and Training would develop a plan together that reflected the efforts that go into helping people acquire the skills and the competency they will need to meet the demands of the workforce community. The whole effect behind WIOA is looking at eliminating the boundaries between state agencies and getting them to work more collaboratively to enhance people's employment opportunities. One of the items that WIOA talks about is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the State VR program

and AT Program. The dilemma is that we have not figured out how to write an MOU to ourselves being the lead agency and are waiting for guidance in developing that MOU. There is an MOU with RIDE, but some adjustments will be necessary. It will also be necessary to develop an MOU with Medicaid. More to come.

Kat noted that the last time there was a state plan re-write, she believed RICAT may have been involved in developing the plan through input from the council. Another re-write is due at the end of 2017, and ATAP will ask RICAT if they would be willing to work together on constructing a needs assessment along with any feedback.

Elisabeth Hubbard questioned that in terms of the MOU with Medicaid, does that include BHDDH or will there be a separate one with BHDDH? Kat responded that there is an expectation that the AT program have an MOU specifically with Medicaid and the VR program. BHDDH is not specifically mentioned. The VR agency through WIOA has to have an agreement with them, but not the AT grant.

Lorna Ricci inquired about the Needs Assessment and what was used before and if it was looking at what type of AT is needed. Kat responded that they will need to establish a separate committee to look at what they want to find out and what method to use (i.e. focus group, survey, or environment scan). This should be decided as a group.

Timeframe for the information should be at least six months before the end of 2017 when this portion of the state plan would become due. Elisabeth Hubbard suggested utilizing the AT conference with a panel and surveys to gather information. Also it is an opportunity to talk about the resources available; a lot of folks still don't know about OSCIL and EBEC.

ATEL: Device Demonstrations for this quarter, ATEL did 59 demos with 96 participants.

A client from one of the outreach activities was featured in Hamilton Relay's National Newsletter. One of the devices, which is a CAPTEL 24I, recently received a new feature/program update and has the capability of having a speaker phone. Denise received information on this new feature and also received an email from the client saying she is unable to use the phone because she has a bizarre hearing loss. Denise was able to integrate this new feature with the client's need and the client was able to talk with family and friends again. The client also had the app installed on her smartphone.

In-state Financing, ATEL serviced 68 clients and issued 90 devices with a retail value of approximately \$11,185.

Legislative Update: The wireless bill was approved in the House; and is now in process of being approved in the Senate. Hoping to open up wireless products with apps for accessibility.

Committee Update: For the guests that joined the meeting today, ATEL stands for Adaptive Telephone Equipment Loan program and provides free telephones to RI residents who have hearing, speech and/or muscular disabilities, for a family of one making less \$30,000 and for a family of two making less than \$40,000. If you have one of those disabilities, you may qualify for a free telephone equipment.

Wireless Technology: Wireless technology would be on a restricted release and a certain amount of the budgeted money would be used for that. Because there is so much education, there is hope to partner with TechACCESS to have a venue for people to gather to learn what is available. TelTex, vendor, has developed a program for all the different states where they have identified apps for different disabilities and it comes with training. Some might be able to get the product but not know exactly how to utilize it for their disability. Clients would get this wireless Iphone/Ipad, pre-installed specific to the person and their disability. There is a way to shut the device down if the device should be stolen, moved out of state, or the person were not accessing it for a period of time.

OSCIL: Additional items to add to the report already handed out included: OSCIL opened a satellite office at 175 Main Street, Pawtucket, RI with full-time staff present at that location. There is an IL staff member, as well as staff member from the Deaf Service program. This location was chosen because of the close proximity to the School for the Deaf. Three to four staff people will be rotating: a housing advocate; OT staff member; AT specialist and IL specialist. A meeting room is available at the Pawtucket location to meet with consumers and a CCTV is available for consumers to try out. This location is an extension of the Warwick office with the same phone number. There has been a number of walk-ins inquiring about services. Lorna Ricci also met with the Mayor of Pawtucket to discuss working together on a ramp program.

The center is at their half year mark and has doubled in services – servicing nearly 400 individuals at this point. Referrals went from six to 12 per week to six to 14 per day. Many of those referrals are for AT such as home modification, general IL

services and hearing aids. The Gift of Hearing Program, run by Michelle Machado, is receiving approximately three to five referrals per day. Funding is available for those who cannot afford the device. It is a fee-for-service with the consumer paying \$600 for a hearing aid as opposed to thousands. It is a partnership with URI.

Lunch and Learns have taken off. Lorna thanked both Denise Corsen and Courtenay Petracca. Meetings are held the last Wednesday of each month. AT is the focus, and there is an opportunity for individuals to try out AT. She encourages consumers to attend.

OSCIL is looking at some funding cuts particular with the CNOM - Home Modification and PCA (Personal Care Attendant) Program. OSCIL was at the State House encouraging legislators not to make cuts to these programs.

Employment positions went from 11 to 18. The YMCA and high school transition services positions are still vacant. There still may be changes within the organization after shifting personnel. There may be in need of a part-time position, limited hours, to answer the phone and meet/greet walk-ins at OSCIL North. Always looking for resumes, please send to: CMckenna.oscil.org

EBEC: Lisa noted that East Bay Educational Collaborative has been very busy.

Device Loans: There were 11 device loans. There have been quite a bit of low tech loans. There are a lot floating around within the school districts and a lot of technology initiatives so it hits many students with learning disabilities. It is about bringing awareness to teachers on what features to turn on and how to provide modifications.

Device Demonstrations: There were 11 demonstrations this quarter with a focus on Google vs. Chrome books. Some districts are doing Chrome books because they are inexpensive and for security and safety reasons. They are the easiest to keep kids from hacking and breaking. Chrome books keep students from “tunneling”. Students can leave a laptop open in their classroom and “tunnel”. (Meaning if they leave their computer on at home they can be watching a Netflix movie when they should be doing school work.)

There were six TVI (Teachers of the Visually Impaired) demonstrations. There are approximately twenty teachers. There has been a great deal of contact with six who are working with the other fourteen. Although the blind students are low incidence

population, they have been using more magnification, using EBEC resources, referring them to TechACCESS for CCTV's, portable magnifiers, and apps.

Three of the districts have purchased a light Aide for their students which is a large literacy training tool. It is a Perkins School for the Blind Product.

Device Training: There were ten device trainings. Those have slowed down. When looking at device training, collective learning, using Microsoft surface, Chrome books, para-educator/teacher assistant training, there is more notice of high school and elementary professionals and not many middle school professionals.

Lisa has been in contact with Northern RI Collaborative and West Bay Collaborative with their transition staff. They are working a lot with high schools and kids 14 to 21 years of age. Much of the educator professional development over the past several years is virtual, on-line, web chats, and web based. This is difficult for assistive technology. There is a need to get people to work hands-on. A lot of the professional development is going toward the virtual direction - even the vendors are doing more digital and electronic. It feels less effective but appears this is the dominate way people are accessing professional development.

Information and assistance: Receiving a lot of phone calls from vocational rehab staff and employment representatives.

There is a finite amount of money and the purchase of AT equipment has been based on AT requests being received. Found this to be effective.

The last four trainings at the collaborative, other than coding and some science training, had to do with: digital responsibility for students, anxiety in young children, suicide prevention and mental health. Lisa believes there is big connection between technology use and those stated above. Although AT provides accessibility and equalizes the playing field, individuals need to be mindful of the amount of technology and stimulation that is happening.

The new technology is wearable technology. There has not been any wearable technology purchase(s) at this point.

It was re-addressed that Lisa Labitt and Melanie Sbardella reach out to Joe Murphy, Assistant Administrator of Supported Employment at ORS, to be included on the docket at his next monthly in-house VR meeting with staff involved with supported employment.

TechACCESS: In addition to the report, there are several other items for discussion. During the last quarter, Kelly Charlebois and Lisa Labitt worked together with the Department of Ed completing three previous Cohorts getting teachers and therapists up to speed on what is happening in the world of technology. Fifteen teachers participated in six training sessions becoming more knowledgeable about AT and implementation. This last session was completed at East Bay.

They are currently in the process of developing a Cohort that will look at training teacher assistants. These individuals will have the opportunity to learn about AT and the most typical tools being used. This Cohort opened last Friday and was full by Tuesday. There will be 15 teacher assistants starting June 1st.

An individual from AVATAR heard about the services offered at TechACCESS. Twelve supervisors and service coordinators visited TechACCESS to learn more about the services available at that location and talked about other resources available through other agencies.

Vicki Ferrara reached out and brought in a bunch of folks from the RI Business Leadership Network. The occupational therapists conducted a training focusing on improving workplace performance and decreasing injury through use of ergonomics.

TechACCESS is also working on becoming a Blue Cross Blue Shield of RI provider in RI so adults and children who do not have the personal finances to pay for services might be able to use their private insurance. Once Blue Cross is situated, then TechACCESS will pursue United Health Care, Medicare and Medicaid.

Kelly commented that she was very excited to have purchased an Ipad Pro for TechACCESS.

New England Institute of Technology has decided to develop a Bachelor of Science in Rehabilitation Technology. There will be five courses related to AT which will be required. Kelly Charlebois has been writing courses and developing a syllabi. The staff will help support the teaching of those classes.

The AT Conference will be held on November 17 & 18. Thirteen out of 46 vendor spots are already accounted for. Constantly getting new vendors and submissions for presentations. Instruct interested individuals to visit the website for information.

New Meeting Date: July 28, 2016 from 2:30 – 4:00 p.m., TechACCESS of RI,

110 Jefferson Blvd., Suite 1, Warwick, RI

Adjournment: Justin Pasquazzi made motion to adjourn meeting, seconded by Liz Hubbard. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm

Attachments: Partner Reports

DRAFT

ATEL Partner Report for 4/28/16 RICAT Meeting

Device Demonstrations

We did 59 device demonstrations and had 96 participants from 1/1/16 – 3/31/16.

A Client wrote me the following: I am writing to you because I have had some really big changes in my hearing situation. I learned that I have moderate to severe loss and hyperacusis (a health condition characterized by an increased sensitivity to certain frequency and volume ranges of sound). The CapTel machine that I have from your office hurts me when I use it. My ears get a loud clicking in them. I don't know where to go from here as I don't use sign language enough to keep it up and I'm getting old... I used to have the program that gives you a view of the person you are calling and also provides an interpreter...have a blank on the name. My sons wouldn't use it and found it too unwieldy for hearing people. Sigh. So...my next step could be another TTY. I am writing to you to see if you can help me to know where to go and what is a good next step. I appreciate any help, time, thing you can do for me. The good news is the new CapTel 2400i just received a program upgrade that includes the use of the speakerphone with the captions. The client was able to turn the volume down low, and with the handset down, able just read and talk without any issues with her hyperacusis. She was thrilled!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I also noticed she had a smartphone, and told her she could use the Hamilton CapTel App on speakerphone and be able to use her mobile device just like her CapTel.

State Financing

We serviced 68 clients and issued 90 devices with a retail value of approximately \$11,185.

Anecdote –After helping my client Connie with a phone for the HOH, she asked me if we could help her dear friend that she can no longer talk to due to her being both hard of hearing and has severe rheumatoid arthritis. I told her absolutely and sent our application to her friend's daughter. I was able to install a remote control speaker phone and the first person she called was her friend Connie, who she not only was able to hear her but able to call her but call her using one finger!!!

Public Awareness/Information & Assistance

We did Technology Demonstration programs on **Technology and Communication Strategies for Persons with Hearing Loss**: 1/13/16 and 3/9/16 and demonstration from 12-2 PM at OSCIL, **Lunch and Learn, Removing Barriers to Independence**: 1/27/16, 2/24/16 and 3/30/16

Presentations and Expos/Conferences:

1/12/16- Monthly Networking Meeting of Senior Providers at Bright View Commons

1/14/16 -NW Links meeting of Senior Providers at Pocasset Manor

1/19/16- Did a booth at the EP Senior Center

1/20/16- Monthly Senior's Rule Networking Meeting

2/2/16-Did a booth at the Shalom Elderly Complex in Warwick

2/9/16-Did a Presentation at Charlesgate in N. Providence

2/11/16-Attended a NW Links networking meeting for Senior Providers

2/12/16-Did a booth at the Cumberland Senior Center

2/17/16-Monthly Senior's Rule Networking Meeting

2/23/16- Tiverton Senior Center informational Booth

3/1/16-Did a presentation at the Narragansett Senior Center

3/8/16-Monthly Networking Meeting for senior service providers

3/18/16-BIARI (Brain Injury) Conference booth

3/22/16-Home Healthsmith Lunch and Learn for independent living products

3/24/16-Leading Age of RI Conference booth

3/31/16-Alzheimer's Conference booth

ATEL Legislative Update

Denise stated the bill unanimously passed in the House on 3/9/16! Senator Coyne is now working on getting it passed in the Senate.

Respectfully submitted:

Denise Corson

RICAT Meeting: 4/28/2016

EBEC Quarterly summary

The ATAP Children and Youth Resource Center located at East Bay Educational Collaborative provides a Lending Library of Assistive Technology Devices and a Demonstration Center for school age children, educators and families.

Device Loan: 11

Anecdote: Low tech Toolkits for Reading and Writing are popular & personalized for several elementary and middle school educators. Students are using colored reading guide strips for tracking and attention to text, and page clarity dividers. Colored highlighter tape, colored paper & raised lined paper are also modifications that provides low tech solutions for classroom literacy strategies.

Device Demonstration: 11

Anecdote: Chromebook and Google format demonstration to 15 educators that are working at the high school level with students. Apps and extensions for supporting students with disabilities provide literacy and access.

Device Trainings: 10

Number of Participants: 298

- Blended Learning using the Microsoft Surface pro 3 cont.
- Chromebooks for all learners
- Para Educators: Communication low tech, reading support, built in feature access in phones.
- Mobile Tech tools for Employment
- Reading Technology Tools for Learning Disabilities
- Communication options for Autism and verbal expression using low tech tools

Info. & Assistance 83 East Bay receives phone calls and informational requests from families, educators,

administrators & employment representatives routinely. A variety of informational responses including referral to other agencies, equipment vendors and On-line resources provided in an e mail response, phone call and some website activity.

Anecdote:

Director(s) of Special Education: Narragansett RI, East Providence requires support for a Professional Development Day for Teacher Assistants as well as Secondary High School educators in Chromebook set up and use for digital learning environment.

Respectfully submitted: Lisa Labitt 4/25/2016



OCEAN STATE CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

1944 Warwick Avenue, Warwick, RI 02889

www.oscil.org ~ info@oscil.org

Report for April 28, 2016 RICAT Meeting

Highlights from Quarter: January – March 2016

- **Information & Assistance & Public Awareness:**
 - OSCIL's Information & Referral Specialists responded to 118 requests for information on AT, primarily from consumers, but also from family members and various other health service providers. These requests were via phone calls, emails, via OSCIL's website and Facebook page and also from walk-ins.
 - OSCIL took part in the following events/presentations: Accessible Voting Machine Demonstration at OSCIL, RI Foundation Summit on Housing, Pilgrim Senior Center Outreach, Leon Mathieu Senior Center, 3 Monthly Lunch and Learn Workshops held at OSCIL's Warwick location.
- **Demonstrations**
69 demonstrations of AT devices or equipment were done during the quarter with the majority in the Daily Living category.
- **Device Loans – Short-Term**
During this quarter, OSCIL loaned out 3 items as short-term loans.
- **Reassignment/Refurbishment**
OSCIL gave out 13 pieces of refurbished equipment.
- **Reuse - Open Ended Loans**
During the quarter OSCIL gave out 45 pieces of AT through open-ended loans.

Summary of AT included:

- Rollators
- Wireless headphones
- Hand-held showers

- Pill reminder alarm clock
- Visual AT
- Flashing doorbell
- Couch cane
- Alert Master
- Bed Rails
- Voice recorder
- Magnifiers
- Penfriend
- Cutlery set
- Long handled sponge
- Key turner
- Voice recorder
- Handibars
- Transfer wheelchair
- Shower chair
- Tub Transfer Benches
- Reachers
- Raised toilet seats
- Donated ramp

These items enable consumers to address barriers to independence and eliminate the necessity of having to purchase these items.

- **Technical Assistance - Transition Services:** During the quarter, OSCIL provided assistance to 5 individuals through its Community Living Options Program (Nursing Home Transition). One (1) was successfully transferred and one (1) is in the process of being transitioned. Three (3) are receiving post-transition services.
- **Other Activities.**
 - OSCIL's AT IL Coordinator continues to participate in the ATEL Advisory Committee and ATEL's Technology Night training.
 - OSCIL continues to offer monthly Lunch & Learn opportunities regarding AT and other topics of interest to our consumers and the general public. Topics in this quarter included Talking Books Plus (digital books) and Low Vision AT.
 - OSCIL continues its collaboration with the United Way 211 Outreach RV to provide outreach on OSCIL's premises on a monthly basis.

- **Case Study**

This consumer is a 63 year-old woman who lives in subsidized housing and has premature retinopathy which causes complete blindness in her left eye and low vision in her right eye. The consumer called OSCIL and reported that she was “drowning in paperwork”. She wished to remain independent in her financial management and with the organization of her medical documents, but was unable to because of her decreased vision. She could no longer fill out checks, or read her mail or medical paperwork. This barrier was significantly affecting her ability to remain independent. A DaVinci Pro was brought to the consumer for her to trial. Throughout the trial the consumer was able to read her documents and exclaimed “This is incredible!” “Oh, wow!” “This is wonderful!” and “It’s amazing!”. She was ecstatic that this piece of technology could not only enlarge the text big enough for her to see it, but could also read the text aloud to her, assuring her what the text was saying.

The next area that was addressed was the consumer’s request to remain independent in the organization of her financial and medical documents. The consumer was provided a pen friend, which is a device that allows you to record your voice, and then your recording is activated by different stickers simply by touching the pen friend to the sticker. The consumer will place a sticker on a folder and then record her voice describing the contents of that folder. Now the consumer is able to identify what the document is by use of her DaVinci, and then can place it in the correct file by using her pen friend to ID what the contents are. The consumer was overjoyed that she would now not only be able to read the documents, but she could also quickly find them as she needed them. The two devices were set-up and delivered and the consumer reports having met her goal of achieving independent in medical and financial management. This AT not only significantly helped the consumer remain independent in her daily living tasks, but helped improve her confidence and quality of life.

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RICAT MEETING
April 28, 2016
ATAP Partner Reporting: TechACCESS of RI
Highlights from Quarter: January, February March 2016

Demonstrations

We continue to offer monthly Technology Demonstrations, with a focus on Technology for those with Blindness/Low Vision, Alternate Access, and Tablet Technologies.

Anecdote: During this quarter we had a request from a family member of a person who experiences communication difficulties. The family had purchased an iPad and was looking for a demonstration of AAC apps to trial before purchasing one. A clinician met with the individual and his family member and was able to demonstrate several AAC apps. The family made a decision as to which one best fit the individual's needs.

Public Awareness, Information & Assistance

- During this quarter, we completed Cohort 4 of our Project AT with RIDE at EBEC.
- We are developing an AT Training Course with RIDE and EBEC for Teacher Assistants.
- During this quarter, we provided trainings on the following topics: Chrome as AT; iPad Switch Access; ProloQuo2Go; Apps for OT's.
- We provided an overview of AT Services/Resources to 12 Avatar Supervisors and Service Coordinators.
- During this quarter, we collaborated with other service providers to present *Improving Workplace Performance (& Decreasing Injury) through Ergonomics Resources* to the RI Business Leadership Network.

Device Loans:

- During this quarter, we loaned 35 AT devices to either individuals with disabilities, or Representatives of Education. While there were several loan categories (vision, hearing, daily living, and computers), the highest loan category was learning, cognition, and developmental.

Anecdote: This quarter we loaned a Kinderboard keyboard and keyguard to a therapist who wanted to determine if the use of a larger keyboard and/or keyguard would improve the typing efficiency of an elementary school student she was working with. She had researched keyboards online and called to inquire if we had this keyboard specifically, as it had features she thought were important for the student. The therapist reported that having the keyboard for 2 weeks allowed the educational team to trial it at different times and for a variety of writing tasks. She reported that the trial was successful and that the school would be purchasing the items.

General Updates

- We continue to purchase equipment for our Loan Library. Based on recent inquiries, we have purchased an iPad Pro.
- We are working with the New England Institute of Technology to develop AT Courses for their BS in OT/PT program.
- The 2016 ATCNE will be held on November 17th and 18th. We currently have 13 vendors. Our Presentation Submission deadline is May 8th.

Respectfully Submitted: Kelly Charlebois

